



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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SACHI A. HAMAI
Interim Chief Executive Officer

April 30, 2015

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To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
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Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
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From: Sachi A. Hamai
Interim Chief Executive Officer

MOTION TO INSTRUCT THE INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND THE SACRAMENTO ADVOCATES TO SUPPORT AB 489 (ITEM NO. 11, AGENDA OF MAY 5, 2015)

Item No. 11 on the May 5, 2015 Agenda is a motion by Supervisors Knabe and Kuehl to instruct the Interim Chief Executive Officer and the Sacramento advocates to support AB 489, which would make ocean lifeguards eligible for the Public Safety Medal of Valor.

AB 489 (Gonzalez)

AB 489 (Gonzalez), which as introduced on February 23, 2015, would add ocean lifeguards to the list of public safety officers eligible to receive the California Public Safety Medal of Valor and would authorize a group representing ocean lifeguards to participate on the State's Medal of Valor Review Board.

Under current law, the Governor may annually present a Medal of Valor, for extraordinary valor above and beyond the call of duty, to one or more public safety officers, as cited by the Attorney General and recommended by the State's Medal of Valor Review Board. Public safety officers eligible to receive the medal include any person serving a public agency, with or without compensation, such as a firefighter, law enforcement officer, corrections officer, court officer, civil defense officer, or emergency services officer.

The Fire Department reports that on any given weekend, the County's ocean lifeguards monitor up to 1.5 million people at 15 beaches across the County, performing ocean rescues. The Fire Department notes that the County's ocean lifeguards performed 33,380 total rescues in 2012 through 2014, often under dangerous water and

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environmental conditions. For example, on the weekend of March 27, 2015, the County's ocean lifeguards monitored 1,349,350 people in attendance at County beaches, performed 18,760 preventative actions, treated 338 people for medical needs, reunited 40 missing persons, and performed 345 ocean rescues. AB 489 would recognize lifeguards at the State level for their bravery and the invaluable service they provide to protect and save lives.

Conclusion

There is no existing Board-approved policy related to awarding the Public Safety Medal of Valor to ocean lifeguards. **Therefore, support for AB 489, which would add ocean lifeguards to the list of public safety officers eligible to receive the California Public Safety Medal of Valor, is a matter of Board policy determination.**

We will continue to keep you advised.

SAH:JJ:MR
PC:ma

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel